

Work-houses the best Charity: ³

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SERMON,

Preacht at the Cathedral Church of
Worcester, February 2d 1702.

By *Thomas Cooke* Master of Arts, and
Rector of St. Nicholas, in the City of

WORCESTER.

Publisht at the request of the
Mayor and Aldermen.

L O N D O N,

Printed for *John Butler*, Bookseller in *Worcester*, and
Sold by most Booksellers in *London* and *Worcester*.

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Printed for John Bauls, Stationer, in the Strand, and
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To the Right Worshipful Henry Gyles
Esq; Mayor of the City of Worcester,
and the Worshipful the Aldermen his
Brethren.

Gentlemen,

YOUR earnest request to have this Sermon Pub-
lished, is a convincing Argument of your great
Zeal towards such kinds of Charity: And the
Conferences I have had with some of you about a means to
procure such a Provision for your own Poor, gives me
assurance that nothing will be wanting in your Endeav-
ours that may Contribute thereto.

It is a Duty recommended as a National care by the tru-
est Father of his Country we could ever yet boast of; but
it is not in the Power of the wisest Senate in the World,
to compleat so suitable a Provision by one universal Law,
as (by leave of their Authority) may be form'd for each
single County; by adapting that Provision to their pro-
per Circumstances.

What yours are, you are the most proper Judges of;
and you have Members of your own Body very capable of
Projecting the wisest means to redress your utmost Griev-
ances, and to promote your happiest Advantages.

Your

You have promises of great Contributions and prospects
of more; the Parliament are now sitting, and your Repre-
sentatives both for the City and County are Gentlemen of
great Estates and Interest, and have been always forward
to serve their Country.

All these Considerances lead us irresistibly on your design,
to which only let me add this further Motive, that there
is no one Act the Wisdom of Man can invent, that will
more contribute to (what the Nation seems industriously at
this time to Aim at, viz.) a general Reformation of
Manners, than this will do.

That God will endow you with a Spirit of Wisdom to
project and carry on this happy Work, that he will in-
crease your Benefactors, and prosper your endeavours, that
these two great Ends may be happily obtained, is the
Heart Prayer of

Gentlemen

Your most faithful and
assured humble Servant,

Thomas Cooke

What you are, you are the most proper Judges of;
and you have Members of your own Body very capable of
Projecting the wisest means to redress your mutual Grievances,
and to promote your happy Advantages.

2. THESS. 3. 10.

*For even when we were with you this we
Commanded you ; That if any would not
Work, neither should he Eat.*

THE Apostle is here reciting a Command he gave the *Thessalonians* while he had been formerly present with them, in which nothing is more Remarkable than the great Zeal he expresses against *Idleness*, first by asserting his own *Labour* which he desires might be Exemplary to them all, and afterwards by a further Exhortation from that becoming Character, so necessary in a Disciple of Christ Jesus, that *with quietness they Work, and eat their own Bread*; Verse the 12.

No doubt but as he was an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and a Propagator of the Religion which was the most perfect of any Religion, he could not but express his Warmth against *Sloth* and *Idleness*, which are so destructive of all Religion and foster the Seeds of every kind of Vice.

In short, so displeasing is this Sin to God, so detestable to all good Men, so Scandalous in it self, and so fatal in its Consequences, that the Apostle here Condemns it, and that beyond the extent even of Charity it self to Pardon; no Pity, no Commiseration, no Relief, must be extended to the *Lazy Beggar*; *But if any will not Work, neither shall he Eat.*

It is natural to suppose the Apostle is here speaking of those Persons whose Fortunes are limited to the narrow extent of their own Industry, that since Providence had not thought fit

to endow them with Hereditary Stores, they should therefore improve the single Talent intrusted to their Care, to their Support and Maintenance, without Clandestinely purloining from the abundance of their Neighbours, or lazily depending on their charitable Distributions: And tho' it is not to be hence concluded, that any State of Men, tho' the Wealthiest and the Happiest in the Dispensations of Providence, should be utterly exempt from Business, yet from the Words I only infer,

I. That it is more particularly their care, whose whole Support is from their Hands, to bestow their utmost diligence in their particular Callings and Employments, that they may eat their own Bread, the pleasing Product of their proper Labours.

II. I shall shew the great Advantage of a Common-wealth or any lesser Community, where those Hands are so Employ'd.

III. I shall shew the great Inconveniences and Damages that must necessarily Accrue where they are not. And,

Lastly, I shall propose a Cure for this afflicting Malady, and shew that *Publick Work-houses* with *Publick Stocks*, are the only proper expedient to make every such particular Person Happy, and by that means to Accumulate an happy publick State.

I. Then it is their peculiar Care, whose whole Support is from their Hands, to bestow their utmost diligence in their particular Callings, that they may eat their own Bread, the pleasing product of their proper Labours.

And this great Dury I hope to evince from the pressing Authority of *Nature*, *Reason*, *Law*, *Scripture* and *Religion*.

First from *Nature*: And truly he would hardly seem to be of natural Composition that wants to have this Motive urged: Let him survey the whole frame of Nature and tell me what part of the Creation is Unemploy'd; Let him look up to Hea-

ven and see the beautiful Luminaries periodically complete their Courses in returning us the welcome Day, the desired Night, and the plentiful Seasons of useful and delicious Fruits. Let him view the Surface of our Earthy Globe, and see the Toyle of Nature in bringing forth her Offsprings, how its several Productions, guarded as in its several Wombs, are secretly Nourish'd, and increas'd to a swoln Maturity, till industriously they burst their Cells and drop in full Perfection; while its Subterraneous Veins Impregnated with particles of different matter are laboriously supplying Mines and Minerals to indulge our Avarice, and support our Health: Or lastly, to limit his Inquiry to a nearer Speculation, let him look noe further than to his own Structure, and in the little World of his own Anatomy, convince me which of the most idle Members (ceasing its Employ,) would not be miss'd. In the politick structure of an human Body, Labour is indeed reduced to perfect Harmony, in which the Sphears are not boasted more regular nor exact; insomuch that the least disorder of its course, or irregular circulation of its Blood, would make as formidable a change in the Countenance, as in the languid Face of Nature, when the luster of the Sun were in Eclipse.

In short, each product of Nature seems industrious by a self conscious Law, and the labour of each Part is mutual from the expectation of a Reciprocal return; so that Nature seems to abhor *Idleness*, for the same reason that she fears a Dissolution; and the same natural Motive that perswades us to a self Preservation, will be sure to instruct our Heads to Project, and our Hands to execute the business of our several Callings, that there may be no Scism in the Body thro' any negligence of its Members, but each performing its proper Office, the whole may be supported after the wise design of Nature.

Nor *adly*, is Reason less convincing of the necessity of this weighty Duty; for Reason is that exalted Faculty of the Soul, that is supposed to govern and direct the Actions of the whole Man. Now if Nature hath instructed us to the necessity of our

several

several Labours, what can Reason be suppoled to do less, than to urge their Performance. If I am convinc'd by Nature, that the World it self is supported by a general Industry, the first Effort my Reason makes against me is, that my endeavours ought not to be Excused. The Bees whose Thighs return unladen to their Hives are driven out as useless Drones: And if improv'd Politicks exceed not meer natural Instinct, for shame let us leave off to boast our Reason.

'Tis strange that Men, swel'd up with the Conceit of this boasted Faculty, should shew so little of its effect, as to be valued only for its empty Name, while they cannot but observe 'emselfes to be out done in the most weighty Instances of a providential Care, by Creatures of the smallest and most despicable kind; *The Goneyes are but a feeble Folk, says Solomon, yet they build their Houses in a Rock; the Locusts have no King, yet go they forth by Bands.* Yet if you compare the natural Politicks of these despised Creatures with the blustering Bravadoes of the giddy Rabble; Which seems to argue the wisest Conduct? When you cannot find a Mouse without his winter Granary, nor Pismires without their annual Stores, while Thousands of unthinking Men, thro' *Sloth and Idleness, thro' Inadvertency and Carelessness,* have not where to lay their Heads, nor wherewithal to supply their Want in the greatest extremities of Hunger, Thirst, or Nakedness.

But these Instances are observed only in the Conduct of those Persons who have abandon'd Reason for the sake of Sensuality. Where our Reason is given leave to act, it teaches us, That we are to administer to our own Wants by every lawful Means we can, That we have no Title to any other Maintenance from other Mens Wealth or Labours, while our own Labours are sufficient for our Necessities, That Nature ne'er intended a Libertine nor a Drone, and That she abhors abuses of her Gifts as much as Imperfections.

But since known Experience tells us there are two many cases in which the Authority both of Nature and Reason are notwithstanding disobey'd, the Wisdom of Government hath thought fit,

bodily. To enjoyn Laws against the Idle and the Sloathful, that where Nature and Reason (the constitutive Parts of Humanity) are not sufficient; Force might interpose Assistance, and compel the Prosecution of that private and publick Good, both which *Idleness* would infallibly destroy.

These we may suppose to be much more ancient than we can trace; it being very reasonable to conjecture that from the first Origin of Laws, *Idleness* hath been still prohibited. But this we are sure of, that from the Origin of all written Laws we have nothing more particularly provided against.

But for this we need go no farther back than to the Civil Law, where we find many Provisions made of Hospitals for the aged and the impotent, with the care of their Government and Disposition, and a Provision also made for what the Law calls *Rogues* and *Vagabonds*, that they might be sent home to their proper Residences and Abodes.

And this seems to have been the Basis on which we have since Founded these multitudes of our statute Laws on this occasion: For 'tis very natural to be supposed, that no constitution of Government, would be without some restraints and limits to such Delinquents, yet for as much as the Roman Government was the first that civilized and polished the rougher Tempers, and uncouth Disposition of the *British* People, we are not ashamed to own that we are oblig'd to them, not only for that, but for many other excellent Originals they have left us both of Law and Government.

'Tis true, we must acknowledge that notwithstanding their Basis and our own Superstructures, all the Provision we have made in this Case, hath either in the Laws themselves or at least in the execution of them, been hitherto ineffectual, which would yet seem strange to us, when we consider their Severity: The Statute of 1 Jac. 1. laying a Penalty even upon the very giver to any idle Vagrant, and the Statute of the 39 Eli. Impowering every one to bring all Wanderers to the House of Correction to be Punish'd; and to make this Power the more useful and extensive, the Justices are not only Impowr'd, but

The 11
Book of
the Code
25th Title
The 6th
Collation,
9th Title,
Chap. 25.

but required to take care, that Houses of Correction be accordingly provided, and all Rogues, Vagabonds, and all idle and disorderly Persons sent into them by the Statute of 7 Jac. 1. And I need not tell you how oft these Statutes have been corroborated and improved by Acts of succeeding Parliaments, endeavouring by all possible means they could to give energie and vigor to the necessary Laws imposed.

And thus far Law as well as Nature and Reason contributes to the prevention and punishment of Sloath and Idleness. Nor

4thly, Is Revelation wanting by its recorded Precepts in holy Scripture to confirm all this unto us, and by its concession to this necessary Duty to give a Sanction and Authority to all these human Laws.

The first of these we meet with is in the 2d Chapter of Gen. where after the Complaint you find in the 13 Verse, *That there was not a Man to Till the Ground*, and after Adam was form'd Verse the 7th, tis said of him in the 15th, *That the Lord God took the Man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it*. So necessary is Business towards the welfare and good of Man, that he was not to be intrusted even in Paradise without it. And it were no unreasonable Reflection should we observe, that had Eve been busied with a share of her Husbands Labour, or any other Employ, while she had neither House to confine her Abode, nor Children to limit her Diversions, she had neither exposed her Character to the censure of Posterity nor betray'd her Innocence to the fatal consequence of a wandering Curiosity.

After this in the 3d of Gen. when Gods Mercy had remitted the severity of the threat, Mans Labour was increased, by this additional Sentence, *That in Sorrow he should Eat all the Days of his Life*, Verse 17. and again Verse 19 *That in the sweat of his Face he should eat Bread*.

And before the end of this Chapter his employ is assign'd him for the whole remainder of his Life. *The Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden to Till the Ground from whence he was taken*. Verse 23.

In the next Generation the labour of Man seem'd to be divided into Two useful Branches towards the support of human Life, when there were but Two Men added to the Creation: One was a keeper of Sheep, the other a tiller of the Ground. And in process of time when their Number multiplied their Labours were so too; Some built Tents and Citys, some were Husbandmen, some were Shepherds, some invented musical Instruments, others were Artificers in Brass and Iron; and thus, aft. Necessity, then Convenience, and after that Voluptuousness and Luxury found a means to employ all Hands as fast as they Increased, so that how great seever was the Wickedness of the old World, for which the Perish, *Idleness* seems to have been no part of it; but Labour was still lookt upon to be so necessary an end of being, that they scorn'd to be unemploy'd, tho in the improvement of *Lust and Luxury*, till the general Deluge came, and put a Period to their Labour and their Sin.

Nor indeed was this wholly to be cured in the next Epoch of our Account of Time, for no sooner was the weeping Face of Nature dry, and the surface of the Earth began again to smile with an inviting Aspect, but we read of *Noah that he began to be an Husbandman Gen. 9. 20.* And it is but in the next Verse, that you are told, *He drank of the Wine and was Drunken*: So pleasing was the product of his own Labours, that notwithstanding all his Righteousness he was yet tempted to Excess. Nor have I need to tell you how officiously laborious his Offspring were, who rather than be Idle, would build a *Babel*.

The Patriarchs whose approved Wisdom had form'd more rational Projections, disdain'd not to stoop unto those mean Offices which this Age would call the most despicable Employ, tho Princes in their Familys and renowned among all their Neighbours: And it must not slip our Observation that among the Catalogue of the Kings of *Israel*, *David* was himself taken from the same Employment. And to descend unto the new Testament, it is the opinion of Commentators that the Subjection spoken of our blessed Saviour to his supposed Father *Joseph*

was, *adjuvans eos in re familiari*, which is a Phrase of Latitude, and may suppose him busied in every thing that they were: But certain it is of his Disciples, that their meannesses and their Poverty did not exempt them from the poorest Callings, and it may be sufficient to instance only in *St. Paul*, whose Education may suppose him to have been of much superiour Fortune to all the rest, yet even he seems to place a Satisfaction in his Labour beyond that of his Authority, that altho he tells them under what Title he might Reap their Carnal things, yet he rather chuses to boast of being no ways burdensome, but *that these Hands*, says he, *have Ministered to mine Necessities*.

After the instance, therefore of all these exemplary Patterns, and the several Authorities before mention'd, there is no hopes of insinuating this Duty by any further motive, but one, and that is Religion.

Now tho' there be little prospect that Religion should have any weight, where the Scriptures have had no prevalence to perswade; yet since it is a name so generally in Vogue, and most Men profess themselves of one kind or other of it, I shall inquire what influence this Name will have, after I have proved the Industry I am here Contending for, to have been a religious Duty, Now in the Proof of this there can be no difficulty, if we but review the last Motive, for Religion is nothing else but our obedience to the Laws of God which either Nature or Revelation convince us are such. And while both these so much abound with so many, and so convincing Testimonies, I hope the generality of the World will own, that they have more Perfection of the one than to be styled Fools, and a better sense of the other than to be convicted Hypocrites.

If then Nature hath light enough to shew me that my Creator expects my Labours, where is my Religion, if contrary to this knowledge I abandon my self to Sloath and Idleness? If the holy Scriptures teach me that God expects my Industry for the good of others as well as for my self: where is my Religion, if contrary to this revealed Light I make my very Business Pleasures and industriously pursue Vanity? If Revelation tells me that

that I am accountable for every natural or acquired Talent that I am intrusted with; where is my Religion, towards that God whose bounty committed to me the Stewardship, if I do not only not improve them but ingratelously trifle them away?

In short, since all Religion is Covenant between God and us, what impudence is it for any one to call himself Religious, while he is conscious that God hath performed all parts on his side, and himself hath yet fail'd in all? When God hath made me a Man, shall I slight that honourable Appellation; and by an unlimited swinge of pleasure be Metamorphos'd into a Leviathan?

If he hath given me reason to convince the Ignorant, shall I abuse this reason to improve his Ignorance, or to withdraw the unwary from the truth? If he hath given me power, shall I exercise it in oppression which he design'd for the assistance of the Distressed? or shall I use my Oratory to defraud the Innocent, which the Wisdom of Providence had intended for the Widows Cause? If a Mans Conscience tells him, (and that it must do if he have any) that God requires an Improvement of every Talent, every Faculty, every Endowment, as well Natural as Temporal; by our industrious Care, to the uses he hath intended them, and is at the same time Conscious, that instead of an improvement he hath abused and lessen'd his several accomplishments, and yet hath Vanity enough to believe himself Religious; under what species of Religion will he lodge his Title? Is he Mahometan, Jew, or Christian? What specimen of Religion is it that indulget a Mans whole Life an Universal Jubilee? What whimsical branch of the most Heterodox Faith, that swallows the most monstrous Errors, would not yet blush at this? To conclude this head, the five Motives I have urg'd to impress this Duty, contain in them all

the Tyes and Authority that compleat the whole Legislative Power over Man, there is no compulsion upon the outward Man, nor any obligation upon his inward Faculties, that is not contain'd in the Latitude of Nature, Reason, Law, Scripture or Religion: If none of which prevail, I may say the same as our Saviour did of the rich Man's Bretheren, if they hearken not to all this, *Neither will they be persuaded to one Rose from the Dead.*

But whatever discouragements a publick Industry may at present ly under, and with what difficulty soever this grievance seems to be redrest, I shall adventure, *2dly.* to lay before you the great advantages of a Common-wealth, or any lesser community where all idle Hands are taken care of to be Employ'd, and the first of these is this, that it prevents that Idleness complained of.

1dly. It enlarges Trade, according to the number of the Hands employ'd.

3dly. It conduces to Religion and the honour and fear of God.

First. It prevents that Idleness complained of, and were there no more in it then this, it were notwithstanding worthy the Wisdom of a Nation to set about it for that only Reason.

Do but take a view of the slothful Man, and tell me who is more miserable and more despicable than he, I mean with relation to his Temporal Affairs only? And what is true of particular Persons will make up the Character of a whole community consisting of such Men. Solomon makes him a degree even below Insects: *Go to the Ant, thou Sluggard consider her ways and be wise.* And to compleat the most despicable

cable Character, in one word he says of him; *The slothful Man hideth his Hand in his Bosom, and it grieveth him to bring it again to his Mouth.* To be idle is a Character that still accompanies reproach, it allows no room for Charity, and hardly admits of pity. The slothful Man is distinguish'd where e're he goes, you know him in the Street by his unseasonable walks, his lazy Postures, and his ragged Garments, you discover him in his Conversation by his loose Companions, his ridiculous Chat, and frothy Boastings, nor is he less discriminated if you follow him home, to an Empty House, a desolate Table, and a tatter'd Family. Such truly is the effect of Idleness that it ruins private Men, destroys Communities and wasteth Kingdoms; to this is ascribed the downfall of the *Perseus* Monarchy with its gaudy useless Occupant, while the *Marathonian* Hero by an exact reverse of his Character scald the Theater of Fame, faster than he descended. And to sum up all in one more instance, it is to this day a Wonder in the Records of History that so Flourishing and unparall'd an Army as that of the *Carthaginians* under *Hannibal*, which was the only one in the World that had been able to give Limits to the *Roman* power, should yet (by indulging themselves but a few Months Latitude in an Effeminate sloth, amidst the Luxury of the Town of *Capua*,) so meanly lose their Courage and their Honour both, and be never able any more to retrieve their wonted Character.

But addy. another advantage to every community, where all Hands are provided with an Employ, is this, That it enlarges Trade according to the number of the Hands employed.

The Ingenious Observer of the Bills of Mortality, tho he hath furnished us with many excellent and useful Observations, hath yet one that extremely Labours, and he seems

at once to be mistaken in his Charity, and his Politicks. He tells us that it were better for the State to keep the multitude of Beggars at a publick Stock, tho they earn'd nothing, then let them be maintain'd as they are, by the voluntary Contributions of charitable and pious Persons; and having made this assertion *page 19.* he explains himself *page 20.* having begg'd the question, that if there be but a certain proportion of work to be done, which be already done by the not Beggars (as he styles them) then the imploying the Beggars in this work were but transferring the want from one hand to another, in which the latter by spoiling it, would do more hurt than good.

But this is limiting Mens Labour to one particular imploy, of which indeed he gives an instance, which the curious may have recourse to, which is all the strength of that argument: But our Modern States Men look much further than this Gentlemans Observations. 'Tis true as to our exported Trade of Manufactures there must be some Limitation and restraint, for we must make no more, then we have demand for, and the *Dutch* (as he very well observes) and since them the *French*, having run away with a considerable part of the Antient *English* Trade, we will easily allow him, that should all Hands be imploy'd that way only, they would be too many. But when we consider the vast quantities of Forreign Manufactures imported, which are consumed by our own Inhabitants, and the many thousand Families that might be plentifully maintained by the Manufactures of those very Commodities, should they be brought over unwrought, methinks the Avarice of our Merchants, and the Pride of our Inhabitants should not be able to prevail against that common good, which the limiting of those Manufactures to our own People would produce: And the great advantage of this extent of Trade will yet further appear from this following Computation.

The

The forecited Author in his computation of the number of the whole People in *England and Wales*, computes them at about six Millions and a half, which a later Author then he, for many weighty Reasons proves to have been then too narrow, but without troubling you with the reasons of his different Calculation, we will suppose with him, they are now at least ten Millions; of which excluding the Nobility, Gentry, Clergy, and Tradesmen, (not Handicrafts,) with their Children and Servants, besides all the Aged, Impotent and Children of all other Persons, we will modestly suppose the number of those that do or might work at their Hands, to be a fifth part of the whole People, viz. Two Millions. And that we may be still within bounds, we will not compute the Labour of every Person, one with another being fully employed, at above 5 *l. per Ann.* upon which Computation it will immediately appear that there is no less than ten Millions of Money circulated among the poorer sort of People: And suppose there be but one half of this exported Manufactures, and all the rest be consumed by our own Inhabitants, it hath at least this publick good in it, that the Poor of all the Kingdom do by their Industry procure and Eat their own Bread; which is a Character highly commendable, and is in it self conducing to Religion and the honour and fear of God; which is the third advantage I proposed.

*Perit, in his
happy fu-
ture State
of England*

For not to compliment the Lazy part of the World, this will appear to be a truth self evident, that no Man can be Religious that is wholly Idle: There are so many wayes of doing good in the World and so many Objects that want to have it done to them, that among the multitudes of those that are above any Calling or Profession, those whom Providence hath placed in the most easy and exalted Stations, there is such variety of Services towards the indigent part of Mankind, that might imploy the Charitable assistances of Men of all Faculties, let their accomplishments be what they

will; and it is so strict a truth, that God requires these assistances from their Hands that he that is Endow'd with any such like Accomplishments, and devotes himself to a profest Idleness, and permits his poor Bretheren to want those necessary assistances; I will not only say is not Religious, but positively Wicked and Uncharitable.

It is a very considerable motive towards all the Religion in the World, to consider the great worth and estimate of an human Soul, and the irreparable damage of every one that perishes, and if we allow the religious part of the World to have a sense of this, we may reasonably infer, that he that takes no care at all of his Neighbours Soul will take very little of his own; He that slightes the spiritual welfare of all Mankind will be hardly thought to have concern enough about him to hope to be saved alone

When Men cease to be inclin'd to do any thing that's good, they generally do something of the contrary: For there is hardly any such thing in the World as Idleness abstracted from every kind of action: And it seems to have been the case of the *Jews* complain'd of by *Moses* in *Exodus* 32. 6. that while they were at ease in the Wilderness without any Im-ploy, not so much as a continuation of their Journey, while *Moses* was in the Mount with God, the consequence of that Idleness is exprest in these Words, *The People sat down to Eat and Drink and rose up to play.* Their Luxury was the first effect of their Idleness, and their Voluptuousness the consequence of that and the common Gulf to which these two Streames led, was the casting off of God and a direct plunge into Idolatry.

On the other side, the diligent Man is not exposed to half so many dangers, his very business screens him from the temptations the Idle Man is exposed to; the Laborious Man hath

hath God always in his thoughts, he is always applying himself to him as his only hopes and prospect, and always calling upon him, if it be only to prosper his endeavours; so that Religion it self with the honour and fear of God is by the diligent and industrious promoted.

But 3dly. As I have laid before you the advantage of a Common wealth, or any lesser Community where all Hands are well employ'd, I shall beg your Patience while I turn the prospective, and shew you the damages and inconveniences which necessarily accrue, where they are not: And these may be included under the following Heads.

- 1st. That it occasions a growing expence unto the publick.
- 2dly. That it exposes the Persons themselves to the greatest difficulties and misfortunes.
- 3dly. That it brings up Children in the most unpolitical and the most unchristianlike Education.

First. That it occasions a growing expence unto the publick.

We have already observed that not above a fifth part of the whole People of the Nation are the working part; and as cases now stand, we may suppose that not above a fifth of those that should work do. Now if ten Millions of Money circulated among two Millions of Persons, be as little as can be supposed for their maintenance at $\frac{1}{2}$ each; If there be two Millions of People to be maintain'd, and but a fifth part of these that get their own Livings by their Labour, what is it that maintains the other four, but the Voluntary Charity of pious Persons, and the parochial Collections for their proper Poor? These of either sort are confest to be very great, inasmuch that even the wealthiest, and the most cha-

terrible, complain of the heavy burthen; for let Provisions and Cloathes be never so dear, they still must be and are had among the poorest in the Nation; insomuch that the forecited observator of the Bills of Mortality tells you, there is not one in above twenty thousand starv'd, nor even that without an accident; and if the whole of voluntary and compulsive collections for the able Poor, were sum'd up which by their own Labour might be all prevented, how far would it alone extend towards the support of our Fleets and Armies?

Mr. Fish in his *Supplication of Beggars*, wherein he attributes the Poverty of the Nation to the multitude of Idle Monks, computes at 10. 8 d. a House throughout the Nation, a sum of almost 500000 l. that was thrown away on them, and if in his time at 14. 8 d. an House the sum amounted to so much, what shall we think of it now, in almost 200 years difference, when the Nation is almost as full again of People, and there are few Houses that pay so little in a Month, as he computes them, one with another to have been charged with in a whole year.

But I need not endeavour to illustrate this beyond our every Days experience; every Man that pays at all to this Tax is every Day more and more sensible of the growth of it. The maledy is now at its *Crisis* and what is yet to be lamented, this is not the most deadly symptom. For,

2dly It exposes the Persons themselves to the greatest difficulties and misfortunes.

That great Lawyer, and no less good Man Sr. M. Hale in a condolent reflection on the miserable State of the Poor of this Nation, tells you, that altho each Sessions at the *Old Bailey*, more Criminals receive Sentence of Death than are known

known in some Countrey's in three whole years; yet still within a Month the Goals are never the emptier: This he and every sensible Man upon Earth will ascribe unto the Idleness of the People, who rather than work will Steal and Plunder, and at once expose their Characters and their Lives; But surely this is accounted tender in the Eyes of all Men, a Mans Life is so sacred in the estimate of every Man, that the Judge himself regrets the Sentence, The Jury are tender in finding Guilty, and it is not without concern, that the very injured are obliged to Prosecute: Why therefore should not pity find out some happy expedient to remove the cause, that the effect may cease to trouble us?

If Men are naturally prone to sloth, it is more kind to Correct them by a Rod, than by a Gibbet; Idleness is such a path way to Destruction that to indulge Men in it, is to lull them in a Lethargy, and to foment and aggravate the Distemper: Nor is it less dangerous in Spiritual matters than it is in Temporal; the slothful Man hazards all at once; Fortune and Salvation are equally at Stake together, the Apostle tells us Salvation is to be won with Fear and Trembling: And to this will certainly be required the most active Diligence; how Miserable then must he be accounted that is thus Partial to his own Interest, and Treacherous to his eternal Welfare? Nor is this yet the worst effect that Idleness produces, for if a Man will be the Author of his own Ruin, and Suffers for it, it is not yet so bad as he that plunges his Posterity into the same Misery: For this

3^d, Brings up Children in the most unpolitical and unchristian like Education.

Education is that great Improvement of our human Faculties, upon which the great Minge of all human Affairs at this Day turns, and as Reason is the discriminating Mark

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from Beasts, so Education is that only Character by which we excel and differ from one another; it is that on which all the worth we boast of doth alone depend; without this a Man is little serviceable either to himself or to his Country: A meer Man prefers his Passion to his Reason, and is actuated by his Senses, more than his Understanding: The first thing that Nature teaches us, is its own great principle of self preservation, this is to be provided with the necessary supports of Life, as Food and Rayment, and truly where Education hath not instructed Children how to provide all these by an honest Industry, 'tis too experimental a truth, that they learn to Steal them.

But I fear it is not only the want of good Education, but the fatal consequences of a bad one, we should rather here complain of, and their early instances of Thieving is not so much out of necessity as Instruction; How many thousand Families have we in the Nation, (a melancholy reflection) where Parents instruct their Children in all acts of Villany, and breed them up in the very rudiments of Damnation: 'Tis warrant enough for Children to prosecute any kind of Action, the example of their Parents teaches 'em, and a prudent Father will be cautious even in his very Conversation before his Child.

If then, Idleness be the Copy the Children are to follow, if Swearing, Lying, Thieving and every kind of Irreligion, be the pattern shewn them; what a prospect have we of a hopeful Family; how often have Parents and Children joyn'd in the same Fact, and been Executed on the same Gallows? and how often have they Impeach't one another to save their own Lives? These are considerations that would move the Heart of any Man; it would regret the affections of every charitable Soul, to see such a deluge of Vice and Irreligion let in upon us; To see at least a fifth part of the Nation bred up

up to nothing, but Idleness and Villany, Ignorant in every thing but Debauchery, and of no other use unto the Publick, but to be made sad Examples of unwilling Justice, which yet their Posterity will not have Grace to take.

I shall therefore in the last place, humbly propose a Cure for this afflicting Malady, and shew that publick Work-houses, with publick Stocks, are the only proper expedient to make every such Person happy, and by that means to accumulate an happy publick State: And this I shall evince from the following Reasons.

First. Because the Charity of every particular Man hath hereby room to center and unite for the publick good.

2dly. Because a well Govern'd Work-house is better suppos'd to answer the end intended than any thing the Law has yet assign'd for that use, And

3dly. Because the Aged and Impotent will be hereby sufficiently discriminated from the Lazy able Beggars, and both will be taken care of as the Law directs.

First. Because the Charity of every private Man hath hereby room to Center and Unite for the publick Good; by this I mean that where there is a publick Work-house founded, and its orders and rules digested, and a publick Stock provided for the Poor to Work upon, every small sum bequeathed to this publick end, is immediately capable of answering the design for which it was given, without having any part of it lessen'd by any necessary expence or charge which generally happens in other kinds of Charity; nor is it so precarious in respect of the danger of losing it, as often happens when reposed in other Hands, and that this way of disposing

of it answers the best end of Charity, is demonstrable from this instance.

The forecited Sr. M. H. in a computation of one instance of Manufacture, (which will serve indifferently for all,) computes the manufacture at about two thirds more than the prime cost of the Commodity, so that if the Commodity unwrought be worth 10*l.* it sells at 30*l.* 20*l.* of which is the gratuity of the Labourers, according to which rule, (observe the difference) if a Man gives 10*l.* for ever to the Poor, the Interest is no more than 10*s.* yearly, besides the danger of its loss; but if a Man gives 10*l.* into a publick Work-house to imploy poor Labourers that want imployment, this 10*l.* is doubled to the honest industrious Labourer, and the Charity consequently 40 times as much as the other. And a well Govern'd Work-house is therefore.

2dly. Better suppos'd to answer the end intended than any thing the Law hath yet assign'd for that use, for this really assists those that are inclin'd to work and wanted it; and it takes off the pretence of wanting work, from those that are not willing: Besides this, it improves all Mysterries in Trade, and would in a short time leave us no room to wonder at, nor envy Forreign Artificers; with this it would instruct them in Religion and teach them the fear of God, and convince them of the weighty difference of filling Churches instead of Goals

By this you are sure your Charity is disposed of to a proper end; The Charity given in the Street generally buys more Ale than Bread, and the well intended Donation is too often consumed in a Debauch.

How many Family's want Bread, while he that should provide it for them, is spending his Money and time in
Drink

Drink, and overflows with one, while the other is wanting to his Family.

Nor is a Parochial Care sufficient to prevent all this: 'Tis a Nurses business, (not an Officers,) to feed every helpless Infant; yet how great soever be their Crys, I fear it is not all the weekly pay that is allowed, that is employ'd to the Charitable end 'twas meant.

In short it is not every Father of Children that is fit to be intrusted as their Steward; if they can get out of their crys, their Miseries never more affect them: And therefore,

Thirdly. We must betake our selves to this only Cure for all this, because hereby the Aged and the Impotent will be sufficiently discriminated from the lazy idle Beggar, and both will be taken care of as the Law directs.

For truly as matters now stand, the Aged and the Impotent suffer for the Lazy and the Idle: If there be an aged Person or a Cripple in the Family of one that is able to Work and will not; the very consideration of his Idleness is a Barr against the Charity intended, because they know the Impotent shall have the least share of it: Whereas in a publick Work-house the proper circumstances of every Person is considered: For I would have no Work-house that should not also be an Hospital; and as it contains a Bridewel to compel the Lazy, so should it have proper receptacles to succour the distressed: Aged and Impotent Persons there will be among us as long as the World endureth, and God forbid but they should be taken care of.

These are the Poor which *Moses* tells us will never fail, and these the only ones for which all our charitable Laws were e're intended: Which since they have hitherto fail'd

of.

of their desired success, and since it appears to all the thinking part of the Nation plain, that all projections must fail unless publick receptacles, with publick Stocks be provided for the Poor, and Vagrants; and such as will not provide themselves Work out of them, be sent into them, and instructed into, and compel'd to follow such employments, as they shall be found most capable of; I hope a discourse of this kind will not be deem'd unseasonable, since it is Innocently meant, as a perswasive to all publick spirited Persons to set about them, as a thing so highly conducing (in this our extremity) to the good of the Poor, the improvement of Trade, the Honour of the Nation, and the Glory and Praise of God.

FINIS.